

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 3567

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS PINT, AR
SUBJECT ARGENTINA AMBASSADOR AJA ESPIL TALKS TO AMBASSADOR CASTRO
ABOUT HIS VISIT WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA

REF: BUENOS AIRES 3557

JORGE AJA ESPIL, ARGENTINA AMBASSADOR TO US, VISITED ME THIS
MORNING AND TOLD FOLLOWING SALIENT POINTS ABOUT HIS RECENT
INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA:

1. PRESIDENT VIDELA IS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT HIS REPLACE
MENT IN THE JUNTA. HE FAVORS GENERAL VIOLA, BUT RUMORS HAVE IT
THAT IF VOTING TOOK PLACE TODAY IT WOULD BE A TOSS UP BETWEEN
VIOLA AND GENERAL MENENDEZ, NOTED HARDLINER FROM CORDOBA.
CURRENT FEELING IS THAT VOTING IS STACKED FIVE TO FOUR FOR
VIOLA. EXTREME RIGHT WING PRESSURES BEING EXERTED ON POWERS
THAT COULD PRODUCE OPPOSITE RESULTS. DELAY FAVORS MENENDEZ.

2. ARGUMENT IS BEING GIVEN VIDELA THAT IF VIOLA RETIRES THEN
MENENDEZ PROMOTION WOULD PERMIT A NEW CLASS OF OFFICERS TO
MOVE UP TO KEY SPOTS. SUPPOSEDLY PLACING VIOLA IN THE JUNTA
WOULD PRODUCE STAGNATION AND NEGATIVELY AFFECT ARMY MORALE.
AJA ESPIL FEELS VIDELA IS BEING PERSUADED BY THIS ARGU
MENT TO ABANDON VIOLAS CAUSE

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3. VIDELA HIMSELF IN A FRUSTRATING SITUATION. HE
IS THE NEW LEADER, BUT YET HIS POWERS AND PEROGATIVES
REMAIN UNDEFINED. HE, AT THIS TIME, DOESNT EVEN KNOW
IF HE HAS AUTHORITY TO APPOINT CABINET MEMBERS. VIDELA
TOLD AJA ESPIL THAT THESE MATTERS WOULD BE RESOLVED BY
AUGUST 1. THAT HE, VIDELA, ON THAT DATE EXPECTED TO A

ADDRESS THE NATION.

4. THAT ON AUGUST 1 VIDELA WAS EXPECTED TO MAKE STATEMENT THAT ARGENTINE WAS RETURNING TO RULE OF LAW. HE WOULD PROBABLY EMPHASIZE GOAS RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE PRESERVATION OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS. VIDELA SUPPOSEDLY MADE REFERENCE TO GENERAL HARGUINDEGUYS PUBLIC DEMAND THAT SECURITY FORCES NORMALIZE THEIR PROCEDURES.

5. VIDELA WILL NOT ATTEND THE UN DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE BUT THAT FONMIN MONTES WILL DO THE HONORS. THAT, AT THAT TIME, TLATELOLCOS RATIFICATION WILL BE ANNOUNCED.

6. JOHN CONNALLY, TEXAS, DID VISIT VIDELA AND AJA ESPIL DESCRIBED MEETING AS A FRIENDLY AND FRUITFUL ONE. ALLEGEDLY THE DELTEC CASE WAS DISCUSSED.
CASTRO

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